



The CIRCUIT WRITER

Newsletter of the First Universalist Unitarian Church of Wausau

December 2015

December Services at First UU

Sundays at 10:30 a.m.

December 6 – One Hand Full of Quiet

Rev. Laurie Bushbaum – Service Leader

Writer Alice Walker says, “Anybody can observe the Sabbath, but making it holy surely takes the rest of the week.” This service will invite you to honor the cycle of creation and the ways that we take time to rest — and to renew self and world.

NOTE: Bring finger foods for the quick stand-up potluck before the annual meeting. Child care is provided.

Dec. 13 – Divine Child, Wounded Child

Rev. Laurie Bushbaum – Service Leader

Many stories of humanity’s “saviors” and spiritual leaders begin with an unusual birth story. Many of the spiritual leaders were wounded, too. Their hearts were touched, broken, and compelled to seek peace, healing, and compassion. All too, are touched with the Divine — and wounded. NOTE: Christmas Pageant Dress Rehearsal after the service.

Dec. 20 – “Follow the Star” Christmas Pageant

Rev. Laurie Bushbaum & children – Service Leaders

Are you ready to follow the star? Are the angels and animals and shepherds ready? The journey of the heart can begin in Bethlehem — or Wausau, Paris, or Weston. Who will lead and where will you find wisdom? And just what part of the story are you playing this year?

Dec. 21 – Solstice Service @ 7:00 p.m.

Rev. Laurie Bushbaum & many more! – Service Leaders

On this longest night of the year, come sing, hear a beautiful story about the returning light, and listen to the heartbeat of the Universe.

We celebrate the beauty that is born of the darkness. All ages are welcome. Walk the labyrinth in candlelight before and after the service, starting at 6:00 p.m!

Dec. 24 – Christmas Eve Service @ 5:30 p.m.

This is a family service for all ages in which we tell the the story of Jesus’ birth in song and story, in folktale and faith. Let the candlelight warm your heart and the singing lift your spirits. NOTE: Bring some cookies and enjoy the company following the service.

Dec. 27 – Reflections as the Year Ends and Another Begins

Randy Jefferson – Service Leader

Using a congregational participation format, all are invited to bring readings or musical pieces they wish to share, or to tell personal stories as we reflect at the end of the year and the beginning of the next. Share works/reminisces that have touched your spirit, special life-enhancing gifts you have received, and/or hopes you hold for the year to come. These contributions will be the core of the service.



In the Interim... *The Really Good News*

Sunday, December 6, is the Annual Meeting. The voting members of the congregation will select 3 new Board Members, choose your Ministerial Search Committee, hear bylaw changes, and approve a budget for the next fiscal year—beginning in January. This stuff really matters! **Please plan to stay after the service, eat something at our “stand-up” potluck, and attend the Annual Meeting.** Childcare will be provided.



Rev. Laurie Bushbaum

The Stewardship Drive is going very well. We have both *more total pledges* in, as well as *more dollars committed* than at this time last year. Thanks to our Stewardship Team, to the anonymous donors who put up the matching grants, and to all who have pledged. We are grateful for the many first-time pledges we have this year!

The “Really Good News” is that if the congregation passes the budget, then we can begin the search process for a half-time Coordinator / Director of Lifespan Faith Development. **Please watch for the release of the Job Description and pass it on to anyone whom you think might be interested and qualified in being part of our UU staff.** As you know, we have amazing parents, volunteers, children, and youth. We are moving into new territory for First UU by creating a program that nurtures the spiritual growth and the faith development of all ages. It will take time to knit the whole program together, but we are off to a great start.

I am so grateful to Jessie Robinson and Sarah Thurs, who have stepped in as our Temporary RE Assistants for the fall. We could not have done it without them. Also, thanks to the Team Leaders for children and youth who stepped up and got curriculum and classrooms ready for the Fall Semester. You have been remarkable:

- ☆ Ages 4–6: Sarah Thurs & Karen Peterson
- ☆ Grades 1–3: Meg Peterson & Rose O’Connor
- ☆ Grades 4–6: Nan Cedar & Kay Meyer
- ☆ Grades 7–9: Sally Schmidt, Karen Monarsky, & Katie O’Connor
- ☆ Grades 10–12: Richard Olson & Kati Maier

In faith and love,
Rev. Laurie

Office Space

The holiday season is suddenly upon us, which means we are busy here at UU Wausau. Poinsettias and greenery are on their way, and soon the halls will be decked.

This year, the Christmas Eve service will begin a little earlier than usual, at 5:30pm. We hope this will give families more time to spend together in the evening. One thing that won’t change about Christmas Eve: the cookies! **Please drop your cookies off in the Atrium before the Christmas Eve service,** and we will continue the tradition of enjoying cookies and company after.

In each Sunday Order of Service this month, you will find Christmas Eve offering envelopes. **This year, our Christmas Eve offering will go to The Neighbor’s Place and The Community Center for Hope.** Offerings can be dropped off at the office or placed in the offering plate any time during the month of December.

As 2016 approaches, **please remember to fulfill your 2015 pledge.** All payments received by December 31 will qualify for a 2015 tax deduction. If you need an update on your pledge balance, you can contact me at 715-842-3697 or anji@uuwausau.org. I’m happy to help!

Anji Spialek
Congregation Administrator



Lifespan Faith Development

Sign Up for the Christmas Pageant!

Children who would like to be a part of this year's Christmas Pageant "Follow the Star" can sign up on the clipboards in the atrium or see details on our website (under Get Involved --> Activities) and email Sarah@uuwauusau.org with which role(s) your children would be interested in.

With speaking, singing, and non-speaking parts, there's a place for every student who wishes to participate! (Lead roles will be decided via a simple lottery drawing of interested students.)

There will be one Dress Rehearsal on Sunday, December 13, following the service. Jeff Krause has generously agreed to provide the music for the rehearsal and the pageant. Very simple costumes and/or props are to be provided by the students themselves from home.

Contact Sarah Thurs at Sarah@uuwauusau.org with any questions or to sign up!

Building Toolboxes & Communities



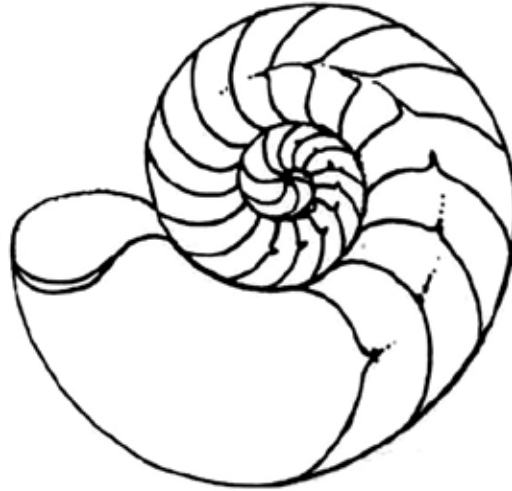
The Toolbox of Faith students used hammers, nails, and drills to *build* wooden toolboxes, which they'll paint, fill, and then donate to children as holiday gifts for their fall Service Project.

The Chalice Children did a great job working cooperatively while learning about being part of a community. They then *built* a community of their very own creation!

NOTE: There will be NO Lifespan Faith Development (i.e., Religious Education) classes for students on Dec. 20 or 27.



Now Seeking Semester 2 Teachers



THANK YOU to all our Volunteer Teachers and Team Leads for a wonderful first semester of classes for our children! We're recruiting **BIG TIME** right now for 2nd semester teachers so that the wonderful folks who got us through this Fall Semester can return to the Sanctuary — and new teachers can rotate in. This is a cooperative effort to provide classes for our UU children. If you can **help out in a classroom for a 3- to 6-week teaching**

session, there are binders in the Atrium of each classroom's curriculum for you to look through and see which age group or topic area interests you. Sign up on the clipboard and we'll follow up with details. Questions? Email Sarah@uuwauusau.org.

Consider the Conversation

Saturday, Dec. 5, 9:30–Noon

Consider the Conversation is a remarkable, thought-provoking film that looks at many of the issues that we will all face at the end of life. The goals for this film:



(1) to change the current American attitude from one that predominantly views end-of-life as a *failed medical event* to one that sees it as a *normal process rich in opportunity for human development*;

(2) to inspire dialogue between patient and doctor, life partners, parent and child, minister and parishioner; and

(3) to encourage medical professionals, healthcare organizations, and clergy to take the lead in counseling others.

Film to be followed by a discussion with a panel of experts in the field. *Consider the Conversation Part 2* will be shown later in the year. ⊕

The Board Table

Judy Beier
Board of Trustees



Our New Ministries

One exciting aspect of the transition from Interim ministry to settled ministry is reviewing the role that all of our members have in deciding the future of our congregation. Our vibrant community is poised to take a leading role in defining what it is to be a caring, welcoming, worshipful community. To that end, Ministerial Teams will be developed to address all those aspects that make us who we are and what we want to be in the coming years. For the next few months, we will discuss the ways in which we can all become more active participants in our future.

We will start with the Program Ministry Teams, Lifespan Faith Development, and Worship and Music. A richer experience into the meaning of who we are, what we attest to, and how to make that a visible presence in our lives is part of what Lifespan Faith Development addresses. This is not just the education of our children, but the lifelong learning for all members. Sometimes it is important to reaffirm what it is that makes us UUs. Knowing who we were, how we as a denomination developed, and how we expanded and redefined all that makes us UUs is the foundation of an enriching spiritual experience. In this complex and often polarized world, our common values are a strength we can lean on. The more we understand these values, share them, and explore their ramifications, the more our coming together in faith, witness, and joy are reaffirmed. Opportunities are in leading such a Lifespan Team, serving on such a team, and educating our children from nursery through senior high.

And in that vein, these beliefs are also expressed through the visibility of our sharing ministry—"lay ministers," so to speak. We have experienced during the summer months the interesting, challenging, and downright joy of sharing our own ministerial talents. The ensuing dialogues have great potential. We need to expand the pool of those wishing to share their passions with us. Even our permanent

minister will have some time "off."

We all enjoy the beautiful surroundings of our Sanctuary and/or Atrium. The meaningful additions of the decorations, from our "Blue Boat" to the Poinsettias at Christmas, the lavish Easter display generously donated by the Yawkey family over the years—not to mention all the other vases, flowers, and drapery—give meaning to the topics of the day. These all take time, talent, ingenuity...often making the proverbial silk purse out of a sow's ear.

And last but certainly not least is our soaring song in praise. Well, that might be a slight exaggeration. Granted, when we have our wonderfully talented musicians or visiting musicians, the sound is soaring. We in song alone...not so much. But we do have talent in our community, and perhaps we can again hope for a choir, enjoy the music of our young (and older) people, and fill our spaces with music.

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First Universalist Unitarian Church

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Office Hours: Tuesday – Thursday, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.

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Board meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month. All interested members and friends are welcome to the board meetings.

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Knowing Our Past...

In 1919, the first performance of *Logos*, a pageant telling the Christmas Story, was presented at our church. The word *Logos* is a rendering of the Greek term for “word.” Theologically, it means the divine word or reason incarnate in Jesus Christ; philosophically, it means the rational principle that governs and develops the universe.

Phoebe Wilson, our Sunday School Director at the time, had seen this pageant at Northwestern University, where she had been a drama student. She obtained a copy of the manuscript by Marjorie Lacey-Baker, and she and numerous women in our church worked to put on the pageant. *Logos* was the first church Christmas pageant offered to the Wausau public, and it drew many people each year. Costuming was very simple initially, but after a few years the costumes and makeup became much more elaborate and professional.

The drama was in six episodes, which followed the epilogues. The six portrayed the annunciation, the prophecy, the colorful and busy highway to Bethlehem, the shepherds and angles, the three kings and their attendants, and the manger scene. The highway was represented by the center aisle of the church, down which the actors walked slowly accompanied by organ music. The pageant was done in pantomime; the only spoken words were the narrator’s prologue and epilogue.

Names of those involved in *Logos* were never publicized. Mary Streeper (the longest member of our church—80 years!) as Mary, and Oscar Allen as Joseph were in the original cast and played those roles for many years. In 1946, Mrs. Streeper took over the directorship of *Logos* and remained director until the last performance—the 50th—in 1979. *Logos* was performed every year from 1919 through 1934, always on the second Sunday in December at 4:30 p.m. After that, there were some years it wasn’t presented.

The pageant remained unchanged until 1959, when the prologue and epilogue were revised to integrate a more liberal viewpoint. In 1968, there was a second revision that was used through the last performance in 1979. Phil Carspecken, a longtime member of our church, wrote all the revisions. ⊕

— Judy Stevens

(I was privileged to be cast as Mary for a number of years in the 70s, and husband John was Gabriel.)



20th Century church in winter

December Membership Anniversaries

Doris See	65 years
Don & Jane Christianson	44 years
Larry & Bernetta Petruzates	34 years
Liz Barr	26 years
Becky Filiatreaux	25 years
Bob Ringstad	25 years
Glenda Walker	25 years
Nan Cedar	23 years
Gale Fisher & Dave Wenninger	23 years
Jerry Phelan	23 years
Steve Rhyner	17 years
Lee Williams	17 years
Ray Kraemer	14 years
Kent & Heather Busig	11 years
Kathy Thurs	11 years
Greg & Ingrid Clark Zavadoski	11 years
Pat & Kay Meyer	9 years
Jeff Leigh	8 years
Charles Patten	8 years
Jane Rusch	8 years
Lanore Rusch	8 years
Nancy Zitek	8 years
Paul & Carol Hagstrom	8 years
Kim Schmutzler	7 years
Kim & Dean Day	6 years
Francis Passineau	6 years
John Pochinski	5 years
Stuart & Karen Churness	3 years
Katrina Becker & Tony Schultz	2 years

UU NOTES

UU Community Focus Collections

December's Christmas Eve collection will benefit The Neighbors Place and The Mosinee Community Center of Hope. Both of these community support groups are well known to us as places not only for help with food insecurities, but also resource centers for enhancing ELS skills, job searches, housing options, and transportation needs. They both have populations with sometimes overwhelming needs. For the rest of our church year, we are focusing on the following:

- January 2016: UUSC (Universalist Unitarian Service Committee) with focus on refugee relief
- February & March: We are tentatively looking at options to fund specific efforts for both mental health and dental health. We've been talking to Bridge Community Clinic to see if there is something very specific we could help with. More on this next month.
- April: We plan to help fund the needs of our Community Garden.
- May (Mother's Day): The Women's Community

The Community Focus Committee is always looking for new ideas/needs—and, of course, people—to join the group. The time commitment is not great (just two times a year), but the rewards are.

We will detail the missions and needs of our Community Focus Collection recipients each month to better keep you informed.

• **Food Pantry Donations** are gratefully accepted in the Reception Hall.

• **Book Donations** are gratefully accepted in the Reception Hall.

• **Glorified Coffee Hour** welcomes donations of healthy snacks, munchies, and juice to share with our members and visitors every Sunday, as well as Coffee Host volunteers.

• **Family Winter Retreat—January 29-31, 2016**
Make plans now to join the winter retreat at Camp Manitowish in Boulder Junction for a weekend of cross country skiing, sledding, snowshoeing,

and indoor fun. There is room for twelve families. Costs are roughly \$26/adult/night, \$13/6-12/night, and free for 5 and under. To sign up or for more information, contact Dawn Ashenbrenner at dawn1969@yahoo.com.

• **Book Pack** will meet next month in Primrose Retirement Community, Apt. 217, to discuss *Just Mercy* by Bryan Stevenson. If you get the *UU World* magazine, you'll find it is currently the UUA Common Read.

• Please consider making a donation to go toward the purchase of **Poinsettias** — in honor or in memory of someone dear to you — to support this caring holiday tradition. For a tax-deductible donation of \$25, we will also print a memorial or special message in the Christmas Eve Order of Service, acknowledging your tribute.

Please send your donation and memorial information to the church office by **December 14**.

[Board Table, continued]

So this is part of who our community is, who we will continue to be, and what we will pass on for the next 150 years. This is just the beginning!

Next topics: Hospitality Ministry Team and the Justice and Service Ministry. Exciting concepts, exciting opportunities, exciting tomorrows! ☺



December Calendar

- 1 Tue 12:00 PM Lunch with Laurie
5:30 PM Family Yoga
6:30 PM Qigong
7:00 PM Table Tennis
- 2 Wed 10:00 AM Shawl Time
3:30 PM Proud Theater
6:00 PM Power Flow Yoga
- 3 Thr 6:30 PM Tai Chi
7:00 PM Table Tennis
- 4 Fri 6:00 PM Power Flow Yoga
6:30 PM Community HU Song
- 5 Sat 9:30 AM Film - Consider the
Conversation
3:00 PM Colin Magnuson Memorial
Service
4:00 PM Buddhist Meditation
- 6 Sun 10:30 AM Church Service
11:45 AM Annual Meeting
11:45 AM Potluck
6:00 PM Overeaters Anonymous
- 7 Mon 6:00 PM Women's AA Meeting
6:30 PM Wausau Bird Club
- 8 Tue 12:00 AM Lunch with Laurie
5:30 PM Family Yoga
6:30 PM Qigong
7:00 PM Table Tennis
- 9 Wed 3:30 PM Proud Theater
5:30-7:30 Labyrinth Walk
6:00 PM Power Flow Yoga
6:30 PM Eckankar Book Group
- 10 Thr 6:30 PM Tai Chi
7:00 PM Table Tennis
- 11 Fri 6:00 PM Power Flow Yoga
7:00 PM Second Friday Nighters
- 12 Sat 4:00 PM Buddhist Meditation
- 13 Sun 10:30 AM Church Service
12:00 PM Christmas Pageant
Rehearsal
10-1:30PM Labyrinth Walk
6:00 PM Overeaters Anonymous
- 14 Mon 6:00 PM Women's AA Meeting
- 15 Tue 12:00 AM Lunch with Laurie
5:30 PM Family Yoga
6:30 PM Board of Trustees Meeting
6:30 PM Qigong
7:00 PM Table Tennis
- 16 Wed 10:00 AM Shawl time
3:30 PM Proud Theater
6:00 PM Power Flow Yoga
- 17 Thr 6:30 PM Tai Chi
7:00 PM Table Tennis
- 18 Fri 6:00 PM Power Flow Yoga
- 19 Sat 8:00 AM Women's Early
Risers
4:00 PM Buddhist Meditation
- 20 Sun 10:30 AM Church Service /
Christmas Pageant
6:00 PM Overeaters Anonymous
- 21 Mon 6:00 PM Women's AA Meeting
7:00 PM Solstice Service
(Labyrinth Walk Before & After)
- 22 Tue 12:00 PM Lunch with Laurie
2:00 PM Women's Book Pack
5:30 PM Family Yoga
7:00 PM Table Tennis
- 23 Wed 3:30 PM Proud Theater
6:00 PM Power Flow Yoga
- 24 Thr **5:30 PM Christmas Eve
Service**
- 25 Fri **MERRY CHRISTMAS!**
- 26 Sat 4:00 PM Buddhist Meditation
- 27 Sun 10:30 AM Church Service
6:00 PM Overeaters Anonymous
- 28 Mon 6:00 PM Women's AA Meeting
- 29 Tue **OFFICE CLOSED**
2:00 PM Women's Book Pack
- 30 Wed **OFFICE CLOSED**
- 31 Thr **HAPPY NEW YEAR'S EVE!**

